

WORKSHOPS PROVIDE “STANDARD OPERATING PRACTICES” FOR ETHANOL PLANT WORKERS

ABOUT SOUTHWEST IOWA RENEWABLE ENERGY. Southwest Iowa Renewable Energy, LLC or “SIRE” is a state-of-the-art dry-mill grain processing facility, located on 275 acres in Council Bluffs, Iowa, producing 140 million gallons of ethanol per year. It also produces over 365,000 tons of Dried Distillers' Grain (DDGs) annually and has the ability to produce Wet Distiller Grains (WDGs). It also produces approximately 90,000 pounds of corn oil per day. The facility consumes over 44.6 million bushels of corn feedstock annually. The grain originates from a large portion of southwest Iowa and several counties in southeast Nebraska. SIRE began producing ethanol in February, 2009 and sells its products—including ethanol, distiller's grains, corn syrup, and corn oil—in the continental United States, Mexico and the Pacific Rim.

THE CHALLENGE. Plant production of ethanol has increased from 110,000 gallons per year to 140,000 gallons over the past ten years. Changes in government regulation and staff turnover and retention were factors in finding a source of best practices and training.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. SIRE sent six personnel through two different Nebraska MEP workshops over a two-year period: Process Safety Boot Camp and Process Controls Essentials. The workshops were designed to familiarize employees with best practices for operating an ethanol plant, as well as gain a better understanding of government regulatory obligations and compliance. The material gleaned from the workshops was ultimately used in making plant improvements.

"The workshops provided through the Nebraska MEP and its affiliates provided our employees with the necessary information to operate our ethanol plant. The cost was very reasonable, and was one of the few opportunities offered in our region. It has more than paid for itself through SIRE being able to retain a position, on our staff of 65. We highly recommend this training from the Nebraska MEP."

-Eric Dreessen, Plant Engineer

RESULTS



Invested approximately **\$150,000** in new plant equipment



Invested **\$40,000** in employee workforce practices



Invested **\$30,000** in new products and processes



Training led to the retention of **1** job

CONTACT US



University of Nebraska-Lincoln
3 Agricultural Communications
Building, 3625 East Campus
Loop South
Lincoln, NE 68583-0939



(402)472-5993



nemep.unl.edu



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